

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Date: 12/7/2012

GAIN Report Number: HK1237

Hong Kong

Post: Hong Kong

Adding or Revising MRLs to Pesticide Residues Regulation

Report Categories:

Agriculture in the News

FAIRS Subject Report

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

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Report Highlights:

The Hong Kong government notified the trade that February 10, 2013 is the deadline proposing to add/revise maximum residue limits (MRLs), extraneous maximum residue limits (EMRLs) and exempted pesticides for its Pesticide Residues in Food Regulation which will come into force on August 1, 2014. U.S. exporters are encouraged to take this opportunity to submit proposals to the Hong Kong government with scientific justification if the existing MRLs and EMRLs levels listed in the Regulation pose import barriers to your products.

Background

Hong Kong enacted its first-ever pesticide residues regulation in 2012, which will commence on August 1, 2014. This [Pesticide Residues in Food Regulation](#) specifies in Schedule 1 a list of maximum residue limits (MRLs)/extraneous maximum residue limits (EMRLs) for certain pesticide-food pairs. The presence of any of these pesticide residues in food at levels exceeding the MRLs/EMRLs in Schedule 1 is not permitted under the Regulation. Except for exempted pesticides, import and sale of food containing pesticide residues with no MRLs/EMRLs in Schedule 1 is only permitted if the consumption of the food concerned is not dangerous or prejudicial to health. In addition, a list of exempted pesticides is specified in Schedule 2 of the Regulation.

The HKG plans to incorporate the July 2013 Codex updates into the Schedules of the Regulation before its implementation in 2014. Also, the HKG encourages the trade, including foreign exporters, to submit any remaining proposals on additions/revisions to the MRLs/EMRLs and additions to exempted substances for their consideration in the light of this updating exercise.

All proposals have to be submitted to the following party with supporting information before February 10, 2013. U.S. exporters may want to copy ATO at atohongkong@fas.usda.gov for their submissions.

Center for Food Safety
(Attn: Pesticide Residues in Food Regulation)
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
43/F, Queensway Government Offices
66 Queensway
Hong Kong
Fax : 852-2893-3547
Email: cslaw@fehd.gov.hk

Further information of the Regulation is provided in GAIN report [HK1216](#).

Supporting Information for Proposal of Revising/Adding MRLs/EMRLs to Schedule 1 or Exempted Pesticides to Schedule 2 of the Regulation

Given below is the required supporting information specified in the HKG's notification for proposing to add/revise MRLs/EMRLs and Exempted Pesticides.

Part I: Proposal of revising/adding MRLs/EMRLs of pesticides already included in Schedule 1

1. The current or anticipated availability of the food concerned in Hong Kong (e.g. trade data and import statistics, if any).
2. A description of the food commodity concerned (product name, Codex food code, product of origin, etc.).
3. Whether the relevant MRL/EMRL of the pesticide-food pair concerned has been established by Codex or any place outside Hong Kong. If applicable, provide the relevant MRL/EMRL, including the residue definition and relevant supporting documents, (e.g. decision documents adopted/issued by Codex or the competent authorities).
4. Data obtained from relevant supervised field trials, particularly those related to the establishment of the MRL/EMRL or exemption from the MRL/EMRL establishment, including the Highest Residue (HR), the Supervised Trials Median Residue (STMR), etc.
5. Reports of relevant food processing studies if available, including known or published processing factors for the pesticide concerned, e.g. after washing, peeling, juicing, cooking, etc.
6. Analytical methods of the pesticide residues concerned, the associated method validation data and source of related reference standards –
 - For those pesticides with MRLs listed under the Regulation, the submission of specific analytical method is still needed as the residue definition or the food matrices involved may not be the same.
 - If the same analytical method is used for analysis of the pesticide with the same residue definition in different crops, the analytical method should be submitted with a list of the crops it is applicable.
 - The crop residue analysis report should include, but not limited to: information of the analytes (including CAS numbers), applicable foods (and food portions analyzed), principle and limitation of the method, reagent and apparatus required, sample preparation and cleanup procedure, instrumentation parameters, calibration method, limit of quantitation (LOQ) and quality control requirements as well as method validation data including precision and recovery.

Part II: Proposal of adding MRLs/EMRLs of pesticides NOT included in Schedule 1

Information required in addition to those listed in Part I:

1. A description of the pesticide concerned, including but not limiting to the following –
 - identity (common/ chemical/ trade names; physical and chemical properties, etc.);
 - intended use (herbicide, fungicide, insecticide, etc.)
 - applicable types of crops and agricultural commodities (e.g. cereals, fruits, vegetables etc.);

- and
- use pattern (amount, frequency and time of application presented in Good Agricultural Practice (GAP)).
2. Toxicological profile of the pesticide concerned, including but not limiting to the following –
 - summary of the toxicological studies being reviewed;
 - the critical toxicological endpoint(s) of concern identified, the safety factors applied during the derivation of safety reference values, and the safety reference values (including acceptable daily intake and/or acute reference dose, where appropriate, established by the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) or competent authorities).
 3. Analytical methods –
 - the source and availability of reference standards, including the parent and metabolites as stated in the residues definition, are also required. Two independent sources with contact details of the suppliers, such as address, website, contact numbers and email address, are preferable.

Part III: Proposal of adding exempted pesticides to Schedule 2

Information required in addition to those listed in Part I and Part II, as appropriate:

For proposal of exempted pesticide, information on whether the pesticide concerned has been allowed to be used in food by any place outside Hong Kong without any limit on the amount of the concentration of its residue should be provided, together with relevant supporting documents (e.g. decision documents adopted/issued by the competent authorities).